

Center for National Security Studies

The Center for National Security Studies exists at Los Alamos to provide the Director and the Senior Management with insight into the connections between national security policy and technology issues. In recent years the relationships between the Laboratory and its programmatic sponsors have become more and more complex. Paperwork and layers of bureaucracy interfere with clear communication and direction about national priorities. Budget actions often seem remote from the technical requirements of the Laboratory's traditional missions. The missions themselves are even being scrutinized and, in some cases, are being broadened to include technological applications in whole new arenas. In this changing world the Center tries to provide a broad perspective on policy issues related to national defense. It is hoped that this perspective will better equip the Laboratory to make decisions about technical priorities and directions.

The Center approaches this objec-

tive in a number of ways. The staff is a mixture of professionally trained policy analysts and scientists drawn on rotating assignments from the Laboratory's technical divisions. Consultants and contract personnel experienced in the assessment of national policy issues multiply the effect of the Laboratory staff. The Center uses its collective resources to study and analyze themes similar to that of the Future of Nuclear Weapons project described in the accompanying article. This research does not attempt to make technical assessments; such assessments are the responsibility of the technical programs. Rather the Center seeks to take a broad, long-range view of the ways in which policy trends at the national and international level may affect program choices. The Center uses briefings and reports to communicate the results of its studies to Laboratory personnel, and it circulates the results among the wider policy analysis community in government, military, and academic circles, as well as private industry. The

Center also sponsors seminars, workshops and conferences designed to bring Laboratory personnel into contact with outside experts and to improve the Laboratory's understanding of defense policy issues. Finally, the Center acts to enhance communication between Los Alamos and other organizations, such as colleges and universities, that are studying issues of interest to the Laboratory.

In an increasingly complex world, the Center is seeking to provide the broad background that will enable the Laboratory to make the best possible technical decisions. The Center stands as a link between the internal technical community of Los Alamos National Laboratory and the external policy community that can have such a profound effect on the **Laboratory's mission and programs.** ■

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a universally shared sense of political urgency and a heightened feeling of technical challenge. The first Los Alamos scientists were charting new scientific territory, and a special combination of scientific and political motivations drove them to be first.

Their spectacular success was brilliantly apparent one July morning in the New Mexico desert. Later that summer, the first nuclear weapons were used to devastating effect at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the first and last time nuclear weapons were ever used in war. Many

have argued whether this use was ultimately necessary to end the war, but no one could doubt either the magnitude of the technical accomplishment or its significance for the future of conflict between nations.

The Present

Los Alamos National Laboratory, along with its sister laboratories of Livermore and Sandia, today stands as a symbol of the continuing role played by nuclear weapons in international rela-

tions. Time and again in the years since World War II, the nation has called on its nuclear weapons laboratories to produce new technologies in support of the national security policy of deterrence. Today great nations do not use nuclear weapons to end wars but to prevent them. For example, the United States can threaten the possible use of our nuclear weapons against any adversary contemplating aggression. The threat is intended to be sufficiently credible and to suggest such unacceptable consequences that no potential adversary